

Basic Computer Skills

The Desktop



Icons

The desktop is basically what you see when you turn your computer on every day. Mine will look different than yours because of the programs I have loaded on my machine. You may only have two or three **icons** on your screen. An icon is the little picture you see that represents a program or system piece. Several are shown here.

The **taskbar** is located typically at the bottom of the screen. It is possible to move the taskbar anywhere you would like. For now, however, let's just leave it.

On the taskbar, you will find the **“Start”** button and small icons depending on which software packages you have loaded.

Below, you will see a box to the right of “Start” that reads “Document1-Microsoft”. Any program you have open will appear in a similar box. It is possible to run more than one program at a time. The second taskbar shown here shows an example of a taskbar with several programs opened at once.



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The Mouse



Rest your hand comfortably across the body of the mouse. Let your index finger lay on the left button, your middle finger on the right button.

Double-click: press down on the left button (index finger) two times very quickly.

Right-click: press down just one time with the right button (middle finger).

My Computer



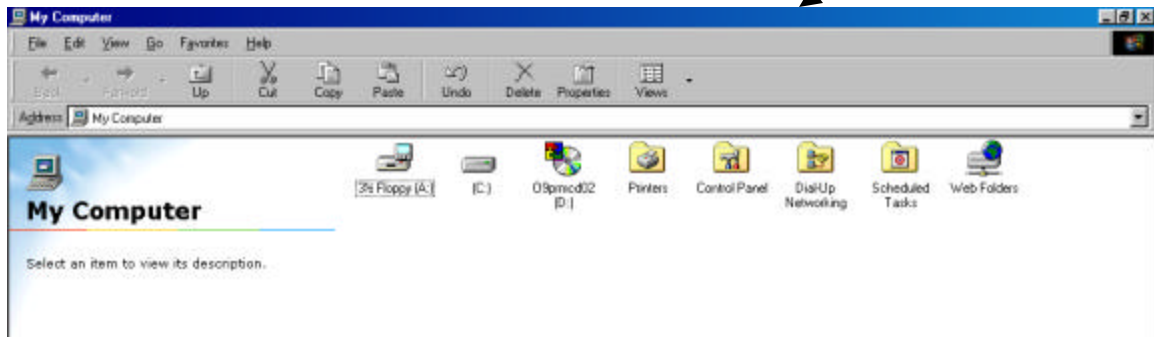
Look now at the **My Computer** icon on your desktop.

My Computer

Inside the “my computer” icon, you will find *every* program, file, folder, and drive that is on your machine.

1. Double-click on the “my computer” icon.

Dialog Box



A **dialog box** will appear. A dialog box is a smaller window that appears after you click on certain icons, buttons, or menu items. There may be instructions, options for changing attributes/properties of your machine, or icons that will take you to other places inside this dialog box. Basically its purpose is to let you make changes with regard to file structure and hierarchy.

Look at the first three icons that appear in this dialog box. They are **drives**. The next four are **folders**.

Drives



We are only going to talk about three basic drives today. **A Drive**, **C Drive**, and **D Drive**.

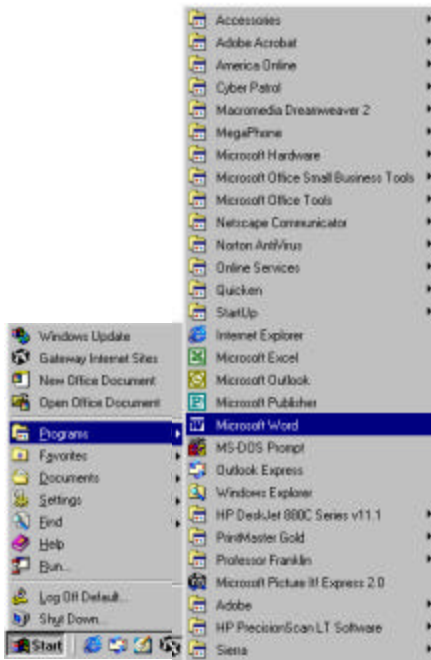
- **The A Drive**
 - The A Drive is simply the space where the 3 1/2” floppy disc is inserted into your computer.
 - If you were to place a disc inside that opening (bottom toward the button) and then double-click on the “A:” icon, you could see what is stored (saved) on your disc.
- **The C Drive**
 - The C Drive is the computer’s memory. Any program that is loaded onto your computer will run from the C Drive. There are basically two components: ROM and RAM.
 - ROM is an acronym for Read Only Memory. Any programs you have loaded on your computer take up ROM space. This space can be thought of as untouchable. You are unable to modify any of this memory. This is where the software tells the computer what to do when you open a program. The ROM is kind of like your *long term memory* in your brain.
 - RAM is an acronym for Random Access Memory. RAM is basically the “thinking” part of your computer. As you edit a word processing document, for instance, the ROM already called up the program and the RAM helps make changes to the words, pictures, and tables as you go. The RAM is kind of like your *short term memory* in your brain. If you do not save changes made in the RAM, they will not show the next time you open your document.
- **The D Drive**
 - Most computers now come with a CD ROM drive. This is your D Drive. Most new software packages are loaded from the CD ROM instead of the discs because CDs hold much more information.
 - CD ROM is an acronym for Compact Disc Read Only Memory. Again, this means that information can *ONLY* be viewed *from* the CD. You cannot save information *to* a CD ROM.
- **Other Drives**
 - Your computer may have many other directories. Many times schools are run on what is called a network. You may have a directory already set up just for you with a certain amount of space for your files, typically called the **H Drive**.
 - You may also have a **shared directory** that acts like a bulletin board for the teachers inside a school. That is typically the **S Drive**.

The Start Button



The start button is where everything begins and ends in Windows. You may not have any icons on your desktop for programs, so you'll find those programs inside Start!

Although it does not make much sense at first, **Start** is also where you go to **Shut Down!** Click on the start button to see what kind of menu you will see.



The menu shown here allows you to check all programs inside your computer. Move your pointer (with your mouse) until the word "Programs" is highlighted. You will see another menu pop out to the side. This will happen whenever you see the small right arrow next to any menu item. It simply means there are sub menus that may be viewed.

When you are finished working on your computer for the day, you may shut down by clicking **Start**, **Shut Down**, "Shut Down Computer" then "OK".

Opening a Program

1. From the Start Button, click on Programs.
2. Scan the programs, and then highlight the one you would like to open by moving your mouse up and down.
3. Click on the icon/words that are highlighted once.
4. The program will open.

Please open Word.

Basic Toolbars

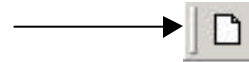
There are four toolbars that exist as a default in nearly all of the Microsoft Office Suite programs.



To move the Toolbars

The four toolbars may be arranged differently than shown above. You may see the standard and formatting toolbars set next to each other instead of one set on top of the other. If you would like to move a toolbar:

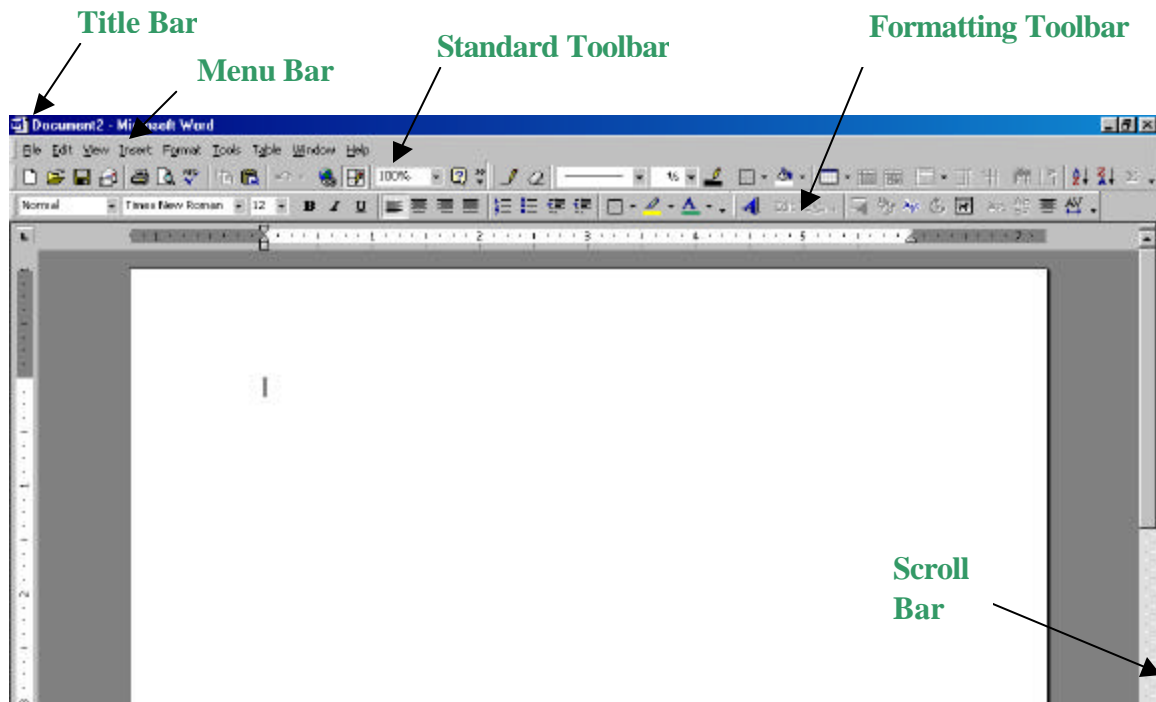
1. Click on the vertical line at the far left end of the toolbar.
2. Hold down the mouse and drag it to the desired location.



*HINT: if you accidentally **close a toolbar** and cannot get it to reappear, simply go to the "View" pull-down menu, and choose "Toolbars", then "Standard", "Formatting", etc.*

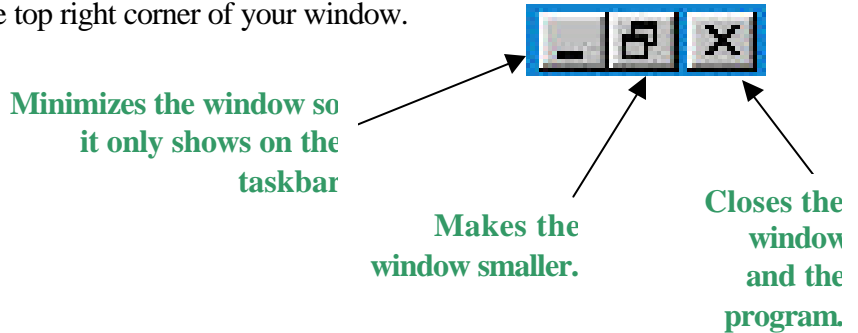
Inside a Program (Word)

- Title Bar:** Shows program and document name.
Menu Bar: Pull-down menus with functions for the program.
Standard Toolbar: Icons for basic functions such as print, save, open, new, etc.
Formatting Toolbar: Allows you to change font, point size, justification, etc.



Closing a Program

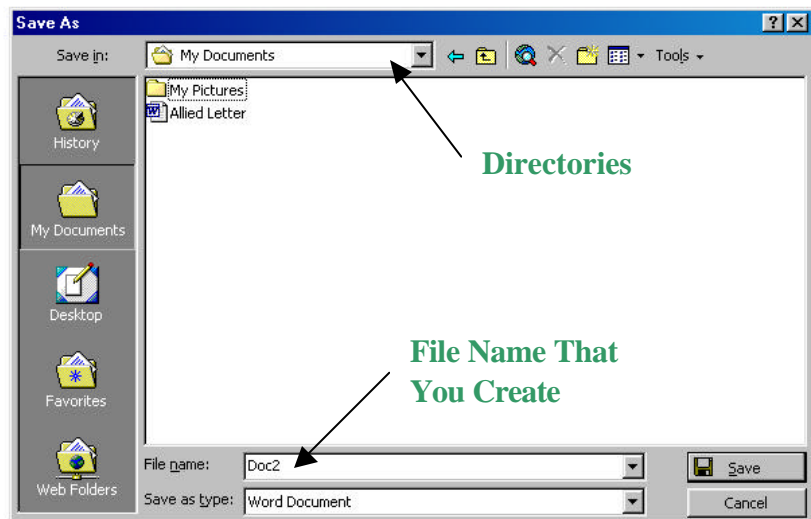
The window your program is in covers the entire screen. If you would rather have the window smaller, you can resize it. If you would like it shrink down and only show on the task bar, you can do that too. If you would like to close the program all together, you can do that. These buttons are in the top right corner of your window.



Saving a Document

1. Go to the **file** pull-down menu and click on **save** or click on the **save icon** (a little open file folder).
2. Place the file in the correct directory.
 - a. You can do this by selecting the down arrow button to the right of the white box labeled “Save In”.
 - b. Choose from the list of directories and folders.
3. In the white box labeled “File Name” at the bottom of the dialog box, type in the descriptive name for your file. You CAN use spaces and numbers!
4. Click on Save.

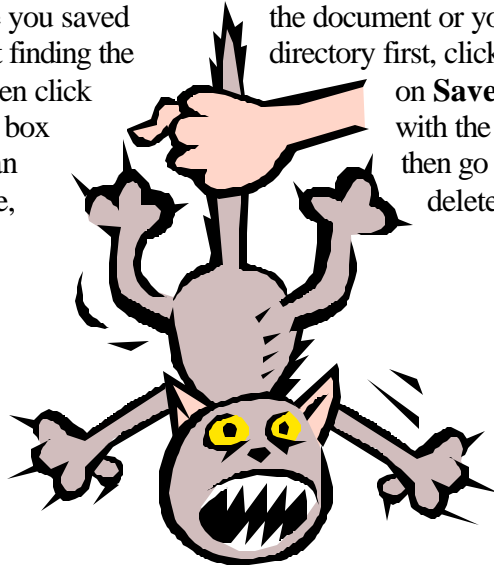
This is the “Save As” dialog Box. There is an important difference between “Save” and “Save As”.



Save: The save command will replace whatever is in the file currently. This is handy if you are saving as you go.

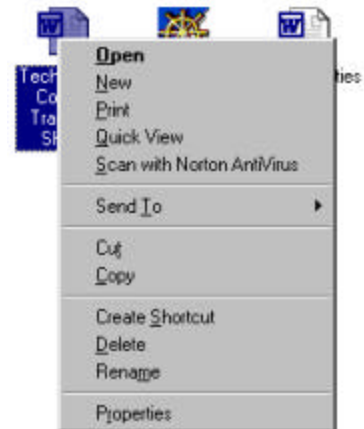
Save As: The save as command will allow you to **rename** the document. You will choose “Save As” basically any time you would like to name a document, making a brand new file.

HINT: If you forgot where you saved accidentally without finding the pull-down menu, then click on **File** on **Save As** and you will get the same dialog box was saved. You can then go into “My Computer” to move, delete, or rename the other files.



Manipulating Files

1. Double-click on “My Computer”.
2. Double-click on the C Drive icon.
3. Double-click on the Folder(s) you need until you find your file.
4. Right-click with the pointer directly over the file.
5. Choose from the menu which function you would like to use. (Cut, Rename, Delete, etc.)



Moving Files

If you would like to **MOVE** a file, you will need to:

1. **Cut** the file.
2. Go to the new location by clicking on the correct folder.
3. Right-click once inside that folder (anywhere on the white background) then select **paste**.



5. Double-click on the “My Computer” icon again.
6. Double-click on the “H:” drive.
7. Highlight the file(s) that you would like to copy over.
 - a. You may highlight **one at a time** by **clicking one time** on the icon.
 - b. You may highlight **two or more** files at a time by **“drawing” a box** around the icons.
 - c. You may highlight **two or more** files that are not in a row by clicking on an icon one time, and then holding down the **“Ctrl” key** on the keyboard and selecting the others.
 - d. You may highlight **two or more** files that are in a row by clicking on the first icon, holding down the **“Shift” key** on the keyboard and then clicking on the last file to be copied.
8. Click the “Copy” button *or* right-click on any highlighted icon and choose “Copy” from the menu.
9. Click on the window showing the “H:” drive to activate it.
10. Click the “Paste” button *or* right-click anywhere on the white part of the screen and choose “Paste” from the menu that appears.

Making an Icon Appear on the Desktop

1. Highlight the program you would like to have show up on the desktop by clicking “Start”, “Programs” and then sliding your mouse over the program that you would like to see appear.
2. Right-click on the program icon.
3. Click on “Send To”.
4. Click on Desktop (Shortcut).

